

House Republican Press Release

August 2, 2006
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Stone Working to Tighten Statewide Drunk Driving Enforcement



State Rep. Jack Stone, R-134, is working with a top-level, bi-partisan group of state leaders to tighten laws and procedures for drunk driving enforcement, at the invitation of Lt. Gov. Kevin Sullivan.

Rep. Stone recently met with the Commissioner of Public Safety and other representatives of the State Police, Department of Motor Vehicles, Chief State's Attorney, a Superior Court judge, anti-drunk driving advocacy groups, selected legislators and Lt. Gov. Sullivan.

Stone said the group is evaluating the entire system from the time offenders are stopped by police until they have completed their punishment to see what needs to be changed and strengthened.

Rep. Stone said, "We are taking a hard look at the whole process including penalties, methods of enforcement and impact of current laws. The legislature has tightened penalties for repeat offenders, but they often are back on the road again, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs."

"The goal obviously is to save lives and get drunk drivers off the roads," Rep. Stone said.

"While we have tough drunk driving laws," Stone said, "the time and paperwork to process a drunk driving arrest needs to be addressed. It can take a state trooper or local police officer many hours away from regular duties to process the offender and fill out the required reports in a drunk driving case."

Rep. Stone, who is ranking member on the legislature's Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee, has repeatedly supported tougher state laws against drunk driving and increases in the number of state troopers assigned to highway safety patrols.

According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2004, 16,694 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes, an average of one almost every half-hour. These deaths constituted approximately 39 percent of the 42,636 total traffic fatalities.

This is a two percent decrease from 2003, when 17,105 people were killed in alcohol-related traffic crashes, representing 40 percent of the 42,884 people killed in all traffic crashes.

In Connecticut during 2004, according to state statistics, there were 1,817 total alcohol-related accidents, 1,371 injuries and 96 fatalities.

In 2005, preliminary Connecticut data shows an increase to 1,872 alcohol-related accidents, 1,387 injuries and 99 fatalities.

Rep. Stone serves the 134th Assembly District of Fairfield and Trumbull in the state House of Representatives.